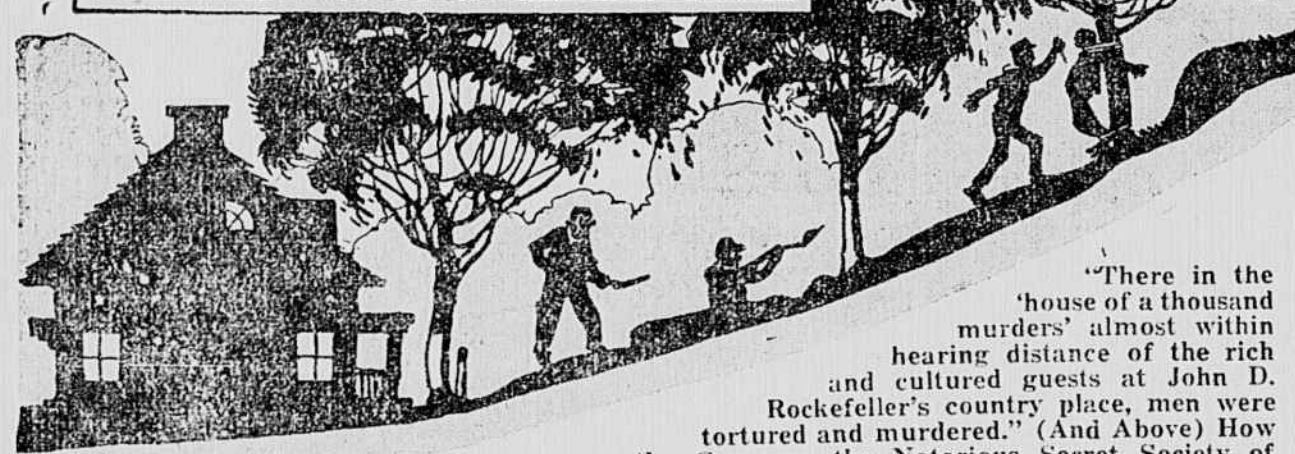




The House of 1000 Murders!

How Torture and Violent Death Were Meted Out Barbarically by a Band That Flourished at the Very Gates of America's Most Exclusive Millionaires' Colony



"There in the 'house of a thousand murders' almost within hearing distance of the rich and cultured guests at John D. Rockefeller's country place, men were tortured and murdered." (And Above) How the Camorra, the Notorious Secret Society of Naples Upon Which Our Black Hand Gangs Are Modelled, Marks Its Victims. Similar Cruelties, It Is Alleged, Were Practised by Westchester's Black Hand Gang in "The House of a Thousand Murders."

THE confession of a condemned murderer at Sing Sing has revealed the existence of a remarkable state of affairs in Westchester County, New York.

Westchester contains the Summer homes of more multimillionaires than any other county in the country. Its palatial mansions and extensive estates have converted its hills and valleys into a succession of private parks of the most luxurious character.

To mention only a few of the more conspicuous examples of Westchester wealth, the estates of John D. Rockefeller, William Rockefeller and Helen Gould at Tarrytown, the Ischolas at Davenport's Neck, Frank Bishop and Oliver and Borden Harman at Mount Kisco and the Constables at Mamaroneck might be specified. A complete list would fill many columns of this newspaper.

It now appears from the confession above referred to and from the official investigation which followed it that side by side with all these evidences of enormous wealth and culture there flourished conditions of barbarism the like of which have probably not existed since the Middle Ages.

This county has for years been infested with Black Hand gangs. Evidences of their work have turned up from time to time in the shape of the mutilated corpses of their victims. Many of these gruesome finds indeed have been made on John D. Rockefeller's Tarrytown estate.

But until the investigation of the murderer's confession the exact nature of the machinery used by the Black Hand gangs in their work of murder, torture, arson and blackmail was only suspected.

There was a rumor, for instance, that in the very heart of Westchester County there was a house, christened by the police "The House of a Thousand Murders," in which practically all of the crimes committed in the name of the Black Hand were plotted, if not carried out.

This house, it was said, was the headquarters of a gang operating not only in Westchester County but throughout the country at large. There intended victims were lured, tortured, robbed and done to death. The cellar and backyard of this murder-house were believed to be thick with their remains.

Investigations made within the past few weeks give startling confirmation to many of these reports.

Not only has "The House of a Thousand Murders" been located, but down in the cellar have been found the hooks from which it was said victims were strung by the thumbs, and the spades and picks of a gang of workmen under the direction of the coroner have brought forth a mass of quicklime which it is believed contains human remains.

Furthermore, the authorities have located a cave not more than a quarter of a mile from this house and on the road which leads to Rockefeller's estate at Pocantico Hills, which was used by the gang as a council chamber in the Summer time. At its mouth stands a tree in which are imbedded over a pound of leaden



Digging Up the Cellar of Charlie Bombara's Saloon, Said to Have Been the Black Hand's Headquarters, to Find the Remains of Victims Alleged to Have Been Buried There. To the Right of the Picture May Be Seen Two Spikes Which, According to the Confession of One of the Black Handers, Were Used to String Up the Gang's Victims.

came to meet at Charlie Bombara's saloon were generally believed to be the ringleaders.

According to Salvatore Marro and Joe Sidera, an eye-witness of the incidents surrounding the Carido murder, the deaths of Carido and Marro and possibly of several other nameless Italians whose mutilated bodies were found from time to time in the vicinity, were the direct result of troubles which had arisen in the gang over Concetta.

Concetta of the Titian Tresses, she might have been called, for those who knew her declare that her locks were of the hue made famous by the great Venetian painter.

Concetta was only twenty at this time, although it is said that when she arrived in this country, a couple of years before, her husband accompanied her. Her beauty made her a widow before she was twenty. Attracted by this gang she believed to have deceived her husband to Fishkill and there made away with him.

At any rate, the gang forced her to participate in their crimes, and she must have proven a valuable asset, for Carido, Marro, Bombara and Treppetti were constantly in dispute as to her "ownership."

Carido wanted her for himself alone. He fled with her to New York. The gang sent for him and demanded the return of the girl. He fled with her to Fishkill. He was again threatened with death unless he brought the girl back to White Plains where all might profit by her charms.

Carido decided to return. A meeting was held in Bombara's cellar—the cellar of the house which the police have since referred to as "The House of a Thousand Murders." At this meeting it was decided that Treppetti should take Concetta in charge. Carido demurred but ultimately acquiesced.

A few weeks later, however, Concetta asked him to run off with her again. Concetta was living at No. 74 Bronx street at the time—a little shanty a stone's throw from Bombara's house. Under the directions of the gang, Concetta arranged that Carido should call for her at midnight provided he saw a handkerchief in her window to indicate that the coast was clear. Carido agreed.

Accompanied by Joe Sidera, a friend, Carido waited and watched the little window on the night in question.

The story of what followed has been told by Joe Sidera in court. At midnight the handkerchief was displayed. Carido approached the shanty and ascended the steps. The door was open. He entered. A flight of seven steps led to Concetta's room on the second floor. Carido mounted the stairs. Sidera heard the report of a revolver and a crash as of a man falling downstairs.

Through the window in which the

handkerchief still hung Sidera saw Bova. He appeared to be rising from the floor. A moment or two later he saw Bova, Bombara and several others now in jail awaiting trial emerge from the rear of Concetta's house. They passed him as he stood trembling in the shadow of a nearby stoop.

This happened a month before Carido's body was found in the sewer, a few hundred feet from Concetta's house. Subsequent examination of the house revealed that Carido must have been shot as his head reached the level of Concetta's floor. New plaster on the wall of the staircase suggested how the bloodstains had been concealed. The inference obtainable from all the testimony was that Bova lay on the floor of Concetta's room and sent a bullet crashing into Carido's skull at a distance of less than a foot as the unsuspecting Black Hand came to keep his tryst. At any rate, Bova was convicted of murder in the second degree and is now serving his sentence. Concetta disappeared almost immediately.

He also said that Concetta was murdered by the gang and buried in

the cellar. According to Marro's friends, Marro objected to the gang's treatment of his cousin, Carido, and his hostility was the signal for his own fate. His death a year later, after several previous attempts, represented the execution of the gang's decree.

All these facts appeared soon after Marro's murder. The additional information which has been obtained through the confession of Rebacci, Marro's murderer, involves other crimes alleged to have been committed by the gang.

According to Rebacci, Bombara's cellar was used as a combined torture house and cemetery. He declared that two spikes would be found driven into one of the beams in the cellar ceiling, and that these were used in the torturing of the gang's enemies and victims.

Investigation revealed the existence of these spikes. They are shown in one of the photographs on this page.

He also said that Concetta was murdered by the gang and buried in

the cellar. Coroner Iles had a force of men excavating this cellar for several days, and discovered a mass of quicklime three feet below the surface in which it is believed are human remains.

Dozens of other victims, Rebacci declares, were lured by Concetta to the gang's headquarters and done away with.

In the Summer the cave on the Tarrytown road was used as the gang's meeting place, he declared. There they practised marksmanship. An investigation reveals a tree in which over a pound of lead bullets are imbedded.

There is an astonishing corroboration of many of the most uncanny incidents of Rebacci's confession. Many of them it is impossible to confirm. His statement that the gang's operations were not confined to Westchester County is believed by the authorities. Crimes over all the country were planned there. Perhaps it justifies them in referring to Charlie Bombara's house as "The House of a Thousand Murders."

bullets and which is believed to have been the target upon which they perfected their marksmanship.

The revelations which are now engaging the attention of the authorities came about as the indirect result of a quarrel over a girl among members of the gang. This quarrel led to at least two murders and resulted in rounding up most of the alleged members of the gang. Two of them have already been convicted, four more are in jail awaiting trial for the same crimes, and three are under indictment but still at large.

The girl in the case was known as Concetta of the Red Hair. From all accounts she was of a very beautiful type. She was only twenty years old when she attracted the attention of the gang and was forced to become one of its most useful members. It was she who was used as a lure to bring intended victims to the torture chamber of the gang.

The story can best be told chronologically.

In February, 1912, the mutilated body of Filippino Carido was found in a sewer about 700 feet from Bronx street, White Plains. His head had been nearly shot off. Although he was known by the police to have been one of the gang which met regularly at a house on the Tarrytown road run by a man named Charlie Bombara, there was no clue obtainable at the time as to why he had been murdered.

Some two months later, while Tony Marro, a cousin of Carido and a member of the same gang, was passing the White Plains railroad station he was shot through the cheek by a lad of nineteen years. The assailant was a complete stranger to Marro and would give no reason for the attempted murder. He was convicted and sent to Elmira.

Two months later another attempt to provide himself with a bodyguard, Joe Marro, a cousin, was employed in that capacity. Tony and Joe worked in the same lumber-yard, so that it was not difficult for Joe to keep almost constant watch on his doomed cousin. Joe kept a loaded automatic revolver on his work bench.

On February 27, 1913, when the quitting hour came, Tony started for home, with Joe following fifty feet behind. Hardly had Tony reached the street than a shotgun blazed forth from a hole in the fence, barely six feet behind Tony's back, and twenty-eight half cartridges found their mark. Tony was killed instantaneously.

Joe Marro ran back for his gun

How I Kept House Without a Servant

By JOSEPHINE STORY.

EVERY woman who is her own cook dreads that feeling of revolt which sweeps over her when, the noon meal just finished, she confronts the problem of supper.

The recurring monotony of meal-getting is the rock upon which many a home ship has dashed to pieces. Here was an efficiency proposition which kindled my imagination! To assure myself of leisure in the afternoon I must accomplish the feat of preparing supper in the morning.

Well, it did not require half the puckered-brow thought to solve this problem that I had given to a game of bridge in less enlightened days. In the first place I made the fireless cooker work for me. Had it not been for that comfort of the servantless, I could not have motored all one crisp, bracing Autumn afternoon and yet have regaled the family with a hot, savory mutton stew for supper.

After luncheon I browned two cups of two-inch cubes of mutton in one-quarter cup of butter, placed this in fireless-cooker pail, added two-thirds cup of tomato, one onion sliced, one tablespoon chopped parsley or a dried celery root, two cups of pared potato cubes, which had been parboiled, one teaspoon of salt, one-eighth teaspoon of pepper, and covered the whole with two cups of water. This was placed on the range and allowed to boil five minutes, after which the pail was placed in the

fireless to cook from three to four hours. When removed, the pail was set on top of range and into the mixture was stirred one-third cup of rice, which had been mixed to thin paste with water. The stew boiled for five minutes before serving.

With this was served escalloped tomatoes, which had been prepared in a baking dish in the morning, with buttered crumbs on top, all ready to be set in the oven at night and browned. Toast had been the bread served, and the dessert was of individual custards with caramel and nut sauce; this also made ready before noon.

Veal loaf, which may be prepared at any time and served cold, is a delectable supper dish. Chop three pounds of veal and one-half pound of ham or salt pork very fine. Mix into it two eggs well beaten, one cupful of fine bread or cracker crumbs, one teaspoon of salt, one-half teaspoon of pepper, one teaspoon of onion juice, one-half teaspoon of ground mace, one-half teaspoon of allspice. Mold into a loaf and place on baking dish. Glaze with beaten egg and sprinkle with melted butter and water.

Macaroni and tomato sauce, hot and tempting, is served with the slices of veal loaf, as the former is a dish which may be prepared early, ready for the final browning at night. We have thin brown bread sandwiches with this and a rather rich dessert of Banbury tarts. These also are made in the morning and are slipped into the oven for a moment

before serving. To make, chop one cup of seeded raisins, add two teaspoons of very thinly sliced citron, one-half cup of sugar, the grated rind and juice of one lemon, one egg beaten light and one-eighth teaspoon of salt. Cut rounds of pastry, place spoonful of mixture on one side, moisten edges of round with water, fold, press edges together and bake.

If the evening promises to be cold, the appetite clamorous and the first course of the supper light, 'tis then that I summon the fireless to my aid and prepare a steamed pudding. The fruit in it may be figs, dates or raisins, the foundation is the same. Sift together one cup of entire wheat flour, one-half cup of white flour, one-half teaspoon of salt, one teaspoon of soda, one teaspoon of cinnamon. Mix and add one beaten egg, one-half cup of milk, one-half cup of molasses, four tablespoons of melted butter, then a cup of fruit. Turn into buttered baking powder tins, filling them only two-thirds full; tie down the covers firmly and place in fireless cooker pail, in which is boiling water. Cover, and when the water has boiled in pail one-half hour, place the pail on hot disk in the fireless and cook about three hours. Serve the pudding with hard sauce.

On Saturday the brown bread is mixed after luncheon and left to cook at its own sweet will in the fireless. Truly the woman who has not yet adopted the fireless cooker will have fascinating fields of experiments open out before her when she does.